

ARE YOU
UP-TO-DATE?

Vaccinate!TM

2003



Adult Immunization

Get the Facts!

If you're a healthy adult, you may not spend much time thinking about immunization. Getting the recommended adult immunizations, however, is one of the most effective ways to help you stay healthy. In fact, vaccines help prevent diseases that affect millions of adults every year – diseases that can lead to hospitalization or even death.

Hepatitis A vaccine

Recommended for adults who have chronic liver disease or clotting-factor disorders, use injecting or non-injecting illegal drugs, travel to developing countries where hepatitis A is common, work in hepatitis A virus research labs or with hepatitis A infected animals, or are male and have sex with other males.

FACT: Hepatitis A virus infected an estimated 180,000 Americans in 1997, and about 100 people die from it each year.

Hepatitis B vaccine

Recommended for adults in certain high-risk groups, such as health care workers, persons with multiple sex partners or who have recently acquired a sexually transmitted disease, men who have sex with other men, users of illegal injection drugs and household members and sexual partners of hepatitis B carriers.

FACT: The hepatitis B virus is 100 times more infectious than HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. This disease can cause long-term liver damage, including cancer, and leads to about 5,000 deaths each year in the US.

Influenza vaccine

Recommended for adults 50 years of age or older, pregnant women in the second or third trimester, residents of long-term care facilities, persons who have chronic illnesses, health care workers and household contacts of people at higher risk. It is also recommended for younger adults with chronic heart, lung or liver disease, asthma and other conditions.

FACT: Each year in the US, there are an average of 114,000 influenza-related hospitalizations and approximately 36,000 influenza-related deaths.

Measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine

At least one dose of MMR vaccine is recommended for all adults born after 1956 who have no medical history of receiving the vaccine or of actually having the disease. Two doses are also recommended for health care workers, travelers to countries where measles is common and adults entering post-secondary institutions (colleges and vocational schools).

FACT: Rubella (German measles) is of particular concern during pregnancy as it can result in severe birth defects, miscarriages and stillbirths.

Meningococcal vaccine

Suggested by many colleges for incoming students, particularly those living in dormitories. Seven states require proof of vaccination or a signed waiver for college entry.

FACT: Meningococcal disease affects the brain and spinal cord and can cause high fever, headache and stiff neck; 10% to 15% of cases are fatal.

Pneumococcal vaccine

Recommended for all adults 65 or older, as well as persons 19–64 years old with diabetes or chronic heart, lung, liver or kidney disorders. Also recommended for Alaska Natives and certain American Indian populations, residents of nursing homes and other long-term care facilities.

FACT: Pneumococcal disease causes 6,000–7,000 deaths each year in the US. Half of these deaths can be prevented through use of the pneumococcal vaccine.

Tetanus-diphtheria (Td) vaccine

Recommended as a booster every 10 years, after an initial series of three shots.

FACT: Almost all reported cases of tetanus (lockjaw) occur in persons who have never been vaccinated, or those who have completed a primary series of shots but have not had a booster vaccination in the past 10 years. Diphtheria can lead to breathing problems, heart failure, paralysis and sometimes death.

Varicella (chickenpox) vaccine

Recommended for those not previously vaccinated and for those who have no reliable history of having had the disease. Teachers of young children and day care workers, residents and staff in institutional settings, military personnel, nonpregnant women of childbearing age, students living in dormitories, international travelers, health care workers and family members or household contacts of immunocompromised persons or young children are at increased risk if they are unvaccinated or have never had the disease.

FACT: Adults are 10 times more likely than children to develop severe complications when infected with chickenpox virus.

Are There Side Effects to These Shots?

Vaccines are among the safest medicines available. Some common side effects are soreness at the site of the injection or low fever. As with any medicine, there is a small risk that adverse events could occur after getting a vaccine. However, the potential risks associated with the diseases these vaccines prevent are much greater than the potential risks associated with the vaccines themselves.

For more information, ask your health care provider or call the CDC National Immunization Hotline at (800) 232-2522 (English) or (800) 232-0233 (Spanish).



Adult Immunization Schedule

AGE VACCINE ▶▼	19–49 years	50–64 years	65 years and older
Tetanus, Diphtheria (Td)*	1 dose booster every 10 years		
Influenza	1 dose annually for persons with medical and occupational indications, or household contacts of persons with indications	1 annual dose	
Pneumococcal (polysaccharide)	1 dose for persons with medical or other indications. (1 dose revaccination for immunosuppressive conditions)		1 dose for unvaccinated persons 1-dose revaccination
Hepatitis B*	3 doses (0, 1-2, 4-6 months) for persons with medical, behavioral, occupational and other indications		
Hepatitis A	2 doses (0, 6 to 12 months) for persons with medical and other indications		
Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR)*	1 dose if measles, mumps or rubella vaccination history is unreliable; 2 doses for persons with occupational or other indications		
Varicella*	2 doses (0, 4–8 weeks) for persons who are susceptible		
Meningococcal (polysaccharide)	1 dose for persons with medical or other indications		

Based on the Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

 For all persons in this age group

 Catch-up on childhood vaccinations

 For persons with medical/exposure indications

Refer to the CDC Web site for specific vaccine recommendations at www.cdc.gov/nip



121 N. Washington St., Suite 300
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 836-6110
fax (703) 836-3470
npi@hmhb.org